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AUTHOR Roberts, Leonard E.
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ABSTRACT

These remarks touch on a variety of topics related to educational administration and the management team. The author recognizes the need for superintendents, principals, and district teams to have a new performance-based management philosophy and system. He believes that although most approaches to educational management tested in the 1960s failed to meet expectations, the experiences gained from this testing form a basis for more successful approaches. The author lists seven of Peter Drucker's recommendations concerning the functioning of the management team. The author mentions that many principals feel the management team is only a myth and that principals have no real power. He notes that principals today feel powerless and frustrated but that many people believe the principal is the critical person in the educational process. He then lists five ideas about what a management team should be and how it can be beneficial to principals. He further lists 11 questions a district should ask itself to see if it has an adequate base on which to build a management team. In closing, the author mentions some experiences concerning management teams in Iowa. (JM)

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Remarks by

DR. LEONARD E. ROBERTS

Superintendent of Schools
Maquoketa Community School District
Maquoketa, Iowa

"THE PRINCIPAL AS A KEY MEMBER OF THE MANAGEMENT TEAM"

Clinic B-25
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FORWARD

Because public service institutions consume half of the gross national product, Peter Drucker has forecast that they are likely to be the frontier of management for the rest of this century.

Education is the dominant public service institution in society. In spite of its previous historic achievements in mass education and a massive investment in excess of 100 billion dollars, public education has been plagued for two decades with uncertainty and even confusion. The challenge of coming to grips with the crisis in education eventually comes to rest on building principals and their superintendent who are the heart of the educational management process.

With an increasingly complex set of responsibilities and constraints and decreasing financial resources, superintendents and building principals individually, and as district teams, need a new performance-based management philosophy and system with which they can aggressively and mutually attack their work.

Establishing a performance-based management philosophy and approach in public education is a mammoth undertaking. Since the mid-1960's, several alternative approaches to increasing management performance and accountability in education have been tested. This "first generation" of management approaches included performance contracting, voucher systems, master planning, program budgeting and cost accounting, management information systems, management by objectives and personnel performance appraisal, administrative systems analysis and work measurement, program evaluation,

community needs assessment, goal setting and evaluation, management development and interpersonal relations training, and organization development.

Most of these management techniques and approaches failed to meet expectations. But from the experience gained from their test in the field, criteria have emerged for a more successful "second generation" of educational management.

SYNOPSIS OF PRESENTATION

In the brief time allotted to me, I'd like to suggest to you a definition of team management and share with you some of the basic principles envisioned in this definition. I'd like to relate to this definition a perspective for the school principalship and finally I will share with you some experiences from the Iowa scene as we have struggled to generate and implement a team management concept to be adaptable to local school settings.

SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF MANAGEMENT TEAM DEFINITION

Although it is not the purpose of this presentation to consider in detail the elements of a management team, it is important to establish a perspective as a backdrop.

Peter Drucker contends a top management team has to satisfy stringent requirements -- it must function no matter what the personal relationships between its members are. He further suggests that:

1. "Whoever has primary responsibility in a given area has, in effect,

the final say."

2. "No member will make a decision with regard to a matter for which he does not have primary responsibility."
3. "Members of the top management team need not like each other, . . . but they must not agitate against each other."
4. "A top-management team is not a committee. It is a team. A team needs a captain. The team captain is not the 'Boss'; he is the leader."
5. "Within his assigned sphere, a member of top management is expected to make decisions. But certain decisions should be 'reserved' so that only the team itself car make these decisions... It is desirable to think through in advance what these areas are or should be."
6. "The top-management task requires systematic and intensive work on communications among the members of the top-management team."
7. "Just because the organization chart shows a top management team does not necessarily mean that there is one. There is need for safeguards against the danger of dictatorships disguised as a top management team."

WHERE THE PRINCIPAL IS COMING FROM

In January 1976, THE AMERICAN SCHOOL BOARD JOURNAL put the question directly to principals: How is the management team concept working? The JOURNAL'S random survey of principals in the U.S. and Canada reported that many principals regarded the management team idea as a "myth." Others contended that team management in their situations was "all talk and no action,"

with the central office still calling the shots and principals taking orders as usual. Specifically, 45 percent of all principals polled by the JOURNAL were distressed that teacher bargaining -- in which these principals played no part -- had whittled away their prerogative as school managers. Nearly half (48 percent) complained that serious troubles hampered their dealings with school boards and superintendents. Many said their hands were tied when it came to making decisions.

"It almost goes without saying that the role of the school
principal is changing.
There are new pressures being applied every day.
State legislatures are calling for more accountability on the
part of the principal and his staff,
whatever that means.
Teachers are demanding more power,
whatever that means.
Above all, everyone seems to be suggesting that we decentralize,
whatever that means."

This statement originally appeared in THE POWER TO CHANGE: ISSUES FOR INNOVATIVE EDUCATION. It was subsequently reprinted in the Chataqua issues of THE NATIONAL ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL entitled "The Remaking of the Principalship."

Viewed in one way, these words express the frustrations felt today by many principals. Gone are the days when a principal could "run" the school

pretty much as he or she thought it should run. Gone are the days of the "old" problems -- growth in student population, getting out the vote, building new buildings, supervising the many and new teachers just out of college, implementing the various "new" curricula.

While some of the "old" problems still exist for a few principals, most are faced with a host of newer, more complex problems which defy the "easy" solutions of the past. One result is that some principals, unable to cope, are leaving the principalship. Others are "hanging on," living with their frustrations, trying to cope in their old ways, and looking toward an early retirement.

On the other hand, the reality of today's principalship can be and is viewed in a different manner by many people in education including many principals. That view, and it is a growing one, is that the principal is the critical person in the educational process. After all the legislation is passed, after all the policy is implemented, and after all the negotiations are completed, the principal is left to perform his or her leadership role where it really counts, at the school and in the community. The principalship is where the real action is and although that carries with it certain frustrations, it also can be exciting!

TEAM MANAGEMENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PRINCIPALSHIP

1. It should be tested against its capability to assist the principal in meeting four basic responsibilities: to be EFFECTIVE in the education of children

and adults; to be EFFICIENT in conserving resources; to keep the organization ADAPTIVE to its environments; and to render a PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY of the organization's performance.

2. It should elevate the status and judgment of the professional principal who must see himself or herself as the master of the system and its processes and view them as an instrument in realizing more effectively a professional commitment to educational excellence.

3. It should be readily understood, even though the skills required to be effective might not be easily obtained.

4. It should be relevant and applicable to the daily challenges and experiences of principals.

5. It should accommodate differing personal styles within and between organizations and be adaptable by any one unit in an organization (such as a school) without requiring that other units or the entire organization be involved.

DOES YOUR DISTRICT HAVE A BASE UPON WHICH TO BUILD A MANAGEMENT TEAM ?

Unless you can respond positively to the following questions, your district needs to "get its house in order" if you are serious about the management team concept.

1. Are administrators represented on the board's negotiating team?

2. Do administrators have an opportunity to react to proposed policy or regulation before adoption?

3. Do administrators have adequate input in employment, promotion and dismissal decisions of school district employees?

4. Is there a regular procedure for determining salaries and fringe benefits for administrators?

5. Do salary and benefits of administrators compare favorably with those of their counterparts in like districts and/or with the state-wide average?

6. Does the district have a formal evaluation procedure for all administrators? If so, did administrators have substantial involvement in the development of the evaluation instrument?

7. Are administrators granted multi-year contracts following a probationary period?

8. Has the board of education adopted a policy statement regarding the administrative philosophy of the district?

9. Does the board of education (as opposed to individual board members) tend to appreciate and support the efforts of district administrators?

10. Does an effective communications system exist between and among all levels of administrators and the board of education?

11. Do administrators tend to understand and support the efforts of the board of education?

In our own state of Iowa, we have an umbrella administrative organization encompassing each of the principals' groups and the superintendents' organization. Because of all of the reasons contained in this presentation, our Association of Iowa Educational Administrators developed a model set of

management team guidelines during the 1976-77 school year. This document was endorsed by each of the respective administrative groups in the confederation during the summer of 1977. The task of 'selling' this concept to local schools has been undertaken. The chairman of the Iowa Association of School Administrators, Mr. Dale Mulford, Superintendent of Grundy Center, Iowa, has developed an overlay presentation and through the efforts of this organization, many administrative groups in Iowa have participated in the training exercise.

In 1976, the Iowa Association of School Boards adopted a resolution endorsing the concept and has been a supportive link in the implementation of the procedures.

In the guidelines published by this organization in a special report on November 22, 1977, to assist in the further development of the process, IASB states:

> The superintendent is the key person in the operation of a school district. As the executive officer of the board and as the head of the school district's administrative team, the superintendent must be involved in establishing the procedure which will provide an acceptable channel for the consideration of administrative team salaries and other economic benefits. The listing of various options as to who could represent the board is intended to be illustrative. Typically, these discussions are held with the superintendent, who then makes recommendations to the board.

Iowa has certainly not arrived. We have many schools where the management team is not a reality. However, with administrative and board groups joining hands to facilitate the efforts, we believe we are well underway in the establishment of effective team management...